

1 Corinthians 13

6/23/19

Sunday Morning

1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

² If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

³ And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant,

⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*,

⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of* prophecy, they will be done away; if *there are* tongues, they will cease; if *there is* knowledge, it will be done away.

⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part;

¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

¹¹ When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

¹³ But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Review:

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they?

30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

1. "But earnestly desire the greater gifts"

a. This verse is saying 1 of 3 things

b. #1. Telling believers to try to for certain gifts

i. That is contradictory of what Scripture says

1 Corinthians 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

1 Corinthians 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

Hebrews 2:4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

c. #2. Telling the church body to try and exhibit certain spiritual gifts

i. Not likely the answer

d. #3. This verse could be misinterpreted

e. This verse can be either in the indicative mood or the imperative mood

i. If in the imperative – it is a command to be seeking best gifts

ii. If in the indicative mood it says – "you keep seeking the best gifts"

iii. The context is clear that they were trying to acquire certain gifts – chapter 14 makes that clear

iv. The context is also clear – chastising them for seeking their own glory & then he says – "I show you a better way"

v. The Nelson Study Bible makes a note that the translation could just as easily be – (but you are eagerly desiring the better gifts)

1. This is a statement of chastisement

V.31 x But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

2. "And I show you a still more excellent way"

a. Better translated "'but' I show you a still more excellent way"

- i. He is saying instead of trying to be the center of attention w/ a spiritual gift – exhibit godly love

*He shows the value of love by showing how futile life is w/out it

13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

1. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels"
 - a. The Corinthians thought speaking in tongues was the ultimate spiritual gift
 - b. He says w/out love no spiritual gift means anything
2. "I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal"
 - a. "clanging" cymbal – the word is ἀλαλάζω
 - i. It is the sound made by professional mourners of that day
 - ii. They would say – "alala, alala..."
 - b. We see this in Mark

Mark 5:38 They came to the house of the synagogue official; and He saw a commotion, and *people* loudly weeping and wailing.

- c. No spiritual gift has personal merit w/out love

V.2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

1. "if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith"
 - a. Even if you have the capacity to understand the deepest mysteries of life – without love there is no person gain
2. "to remove mountains"
 - a. Literally – currently moving mountains
 - i. Someone can be actively involved in ministry & it accrues no rewards w/out love
3. "I am nothing"
 - a. The word used here for "nothing" is the most potent word available
 - i. Literally – means **zero**!
 - ii. No knowledge has personal merit w/out love

V.3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

1. "if I give all my possessions to feed the poor"
 - a. You can give away everything you own – without love, you should just keep it
2. "if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing"
 - a. It is documented history that thru the first 3 centuries Christians would sometimes martyr themselves in a spectacular way – b/c of debt, misery, guilt or seeking glory,
 - i. There was the belief that martyrdom had some special merit – even if self-inflicted
 - b. Their motives were wrong – had no spiritual meaning
 - c. The lack of love cancels out all gifts from God, personal abilities & even self-sacrifice
 - i. Is love that important? Yes!
 - d. It is b/c the lack of love is symptomatic of a bigger issue
 - e. That issue is a lack of a relationship w/ God Himself
 - f. There are some manifestations of having walk w/ God
 - i. One is - it is impossible to have a close walk w/ Him & not have love for others
 - g. The Apostle John is a good example
 - i. He & his brother were not noted for their love for others before Christ
 - ii. Christ nicknamed them the "sons of thunder"

Mark 3:17 and James, the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder");
 - iii. They proved their temperament later

Luke 9:53 (speaking of Samaritans) But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem.

⁵⁴ When His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"

⁵⁵ But He turned and rebuked them, [*and said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of;*

⁵⁶ *for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."*] And they went on to another village.

iv. John became the apostle of love

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

⁸ The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

⁹ By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

¹² No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

V.16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

V.19 We love, because He first loved us.

²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

²¹ And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

h. There have been few men more rough & tumble than Peter!

i. Listen to how he sums things up in his epistle

1 Peter 4:8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

i. The truth is – **spending time w/ God changes a person**

i. A person w/out love for others has not spent time w/ God

- j. The problem is that we must spend time with the world
 - i. The world will continue to show less love the longer it goes on
 - ii. And we tend to allow the world to influence us more than it should

Matthew 24:11 (describing last days) "And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.

¹² "And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.

- k. If love is that important how do we know what it is?
 - l. First by knowing what it isn't
- m. Love is not a feeling – in the movies, the feelings of love wipe out the realities of life
 - i. Two of the most miss-answered questions on the premarital survey are:
 - 1. Could anything ever cause me to question my love for my future spouse?
 - 2. Do I expect your romance to fade?
 - ii. Love is not like the movies, books or songs – it is not a "feeling"
- n. Love is **not** what brings the ultimate fulfillment in life
 - i. No matter how much you love someone –
 - ii. No matter how much you are loved by others –
 - iii. There is still something missing down deep
- iv. It is true that everyone must be loved to be complete
 - 1. Children raised w/out love have many barriers to overcome
 - a. 50 years of study has shown that orphans in 3rd world countries, raised w/out interaction, have an inability to function later in life
 - b. Everyone needs to be loved
- v. It is true that person must love others to be complete
 - 1. People need to move beyond themselves
 - a. It is most fulfilling than to live selfless & sacrificial lives

- b. When you give – you forget about your own problems
- o. Not just any love will suffice – it must be “godly love”
- p. There are 4 words in Greek for love
 - 1. “Love of things” of car, job, house, donuts, etc.
 - 2. “Physical love” – husband & wife
 - 3. “Brotherly love” – between friends
 - 4. “Godly love” – self-sacrificial love for others
- ii. The one God produces is agape love – ἀγάπη – self-sacrificial love – **V.4**

V.4 Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,

V.5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,

- 1. “does not take into account a wrong suffered”
 - a. Is not a score keeper

V.6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

V.7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

- 1. “bears all things”
 - a. Comes from the word – roof – means to not allow resentment to “leak” in
- 2. “believes all things”
 - a. Doesn't mean that you are gullible – means you have faith when possible – believe the best if possible
 - b.
- 3. “hopes all things”
 - a. Looks for the best
- 4. “endures all things”
 - a. Hypomeno – ὑπομένω means to endure under – sticking w/ something when times are tough

V.8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.

1. "Love never fails"
 - a. Doesn't mean that loving someone can't blow up in your face – it can
 - b. It means that love never ends
 - c. But it also means more than that – it is the combo of 2 words – to fall off/away from – a picture of a bloom falling off a bush
 - i. Love never has its bloom fall off – always right thing to do
2. "prophecy...tongues...knowledge...will be done away"
 - a. The gifts of prophecy, tongues, knowledge will all be of no use someday

V.9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;

V.10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

1. "when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away"
 - a. "when the perfect..." – means full, complete
 - i. Speaking of when Christ comes for us

V.11 When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

V.12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.

1. "I...reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things" (**V.11**)
 - a. Paul starts us down the road of progress in Christian growth
 - b. He says he was a child – became a man & permanently put away childish things
 - i. You should be more of an adult believer today than ever & there should never be any going back!
2. "now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face" (**V.12**)
 - a. They had brass mirrors – didn't reflect like our mirrors
 - b. He says we see dimly (word we get enigma from)
 - c. Things that are an enigma today will someday become clear
 - d. All your questions will be answered someday
 - e.

3. "then I shall know fully"

- a. This doesn't mean that you will know everything
- b. God is **infinite** - we will be learning for all eternity –
 - i. The adventure will just be beginning a trillion years from now
 - ii. We will forever be learning about Who God is & how great He is – there is much to explore

V.13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1. "now abide faith, hope, love"

- a. Faith will someday no longer be needed
 - i. Things seen don't require faith
Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

b. Hope will no longer be needed

Romans 8:24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees?

c. Love is forever

- i. That is why it is the greatest

1. Earlier I said that love is not the ultimate fulfillment in life
2. Love is surpassed by worship
3. When the heart is so overwhelmed w/ love there is a need for more – it is called worship
4. When your heart is so full that only adoration, thanksgiving & praise come forth – it is worship
5. We were made to worship –
 - a. When we worship God – then we are fulfilled
6. Not all will understand what I'm saying but those of you that do, revel/rejoice in your future
 - a. Here is your future:

Revelation 7:9

Revelation 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands;

¹⁰ and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

¹² saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, *be* to our God forever and ever. Amen." (*that's worship*)

- b. Do you worship Him?
- c. That **is** our future!